

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 10238 061854Z
ACTION HA-05

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ICRC, AR
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)
APPEAL FOR ARGENTINE PROGRAM

1. I HAVE RECEIVED APPEAL LETTER DATED JULY 5 FROM ICRC PRESIDENT ALEXANDRE HAY IN WHICH HE REFERS TO A VISIT HE MADE TO LATIN AMERICA IN DECEMBER 1976 IN THE COURSE OF WHICH HE MET WITH ARGENTINE OFFICIALS AND SECURED ASSURANCES THAT BEGINNING IN JANUARY 1977, ICRC COULD PROVIDE PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE FUNCTIONS FOR THOSE "DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM". HE NOTES THAT BASIC OBJECTIVES WERE TO "IMPROVE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF DETENTION", PROVIDE MEDICAL AND FOOD ASSISTANCE TO THOSE DETAINED AND THEIR FAMILIES, TO SEEK MISSING PERSONS, AND TO MAINTAIN RECORDS OF THE MISSING AND DETAINED. HAY REPORTS THAT BETWEEN JANUARY AND APRIL 1977, TWO ICRC TEAMS VISITED SOME 4,000 DETAINEES IN TWENTY LOCATIONS, THE COST OF THESE VISITATIONS BEING BORNE BY ICRC.

2. HAY WRITES THAT TOWARD THE END OF 1977, HE DIRECTED ICRC DELEGATE GENERAL FOR LATIN AMERICA, NESSI, TO PROCEED TO ARGENTINA TO OBTAIN GOA AGREEMENT TO ICRC'S
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PAGE 02 GENEVA 10238 061854Z

WORKING ON A PERMANENT BASIS FOR DETAINEES. GOA CONCURRED AND ICRC RESUMED ITS PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE FUNCTION AT END OF 1977. BETWEEN THEN AND MAY 1978, ICRC DELEGATES VISITED 3,400 DETAINEES IN 16 LOCATIONS IN ARGENTINA. AS A RESULT OF THIS ACTIVITY, ICRC HAS BEEN COMPELLED TO ESTABLISH A SIZEABLE PRESENCE IN ARGENTINA.

3. HAY NOTES THAT WHILE MATERIAL NEEDS OF DETAINEES ARE FEW, THOSE OF THEIR FAMILIES ARE CONSIDERABLE. AT PRE-SENT, HE STATES, MORE THAN 700 FAMILIES ARE RECEIVING A FOOD PARCEL EACH MONTH FROM THE ICRC, IN ADDITION TO EMERGENCY AID, MOST OF WHICH IS MEDICAL.

4. HE NOTES THAT CONCURRENTLY WITH ITS PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE FUNCTIONS, THE WORK OF ICRC'S CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY HAS EXPANDED CONSIDERABLY AND THAT ITS CURRENT INDEX OF DETAINEES VISITED AND MISSING PERSONS CONTAIN MORE THAN 20,000 CARDS. THE STRENGTHENED BUENOS AIRES ICRC DELEGATION NOW CONSISTS OF SIX DELEGATES, INCLUDING TWO DOCTORS, A RELIEF DELEGATE, A CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY DELEGATE, AN ADMINISTRATOR, A SECRETARY AND A DOZEN LOCAL EMPLOYEES.

5. FINALLY, HAY, NOTING ICRC'S INABILITY TO MAINTAIN AN OPERATION OF THIS SCALE WITH ITS OWN RESOURCES, MAKES HIS APPEAL TO GOVERNMENTS AND NATIONAL SOCIETIES FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN THE COMING 12 MONTH PROGRAM.

6. THE BUDGET FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 1978 THROUGH JUNE 30, 1979 AMOUNTS TO 2.4 MILLION SWISS FRANCS, COMPRISED AS FOLLOWS: (ALL AMOUNTS IN SWISS FRANCS)

A. SALARIES, SOCIAL SECURITY AND INSURANCE 756,000

B. ACCOMMODATION, DAILY ALLOWANCE, PRISON
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PAGE 03 GENEVA 10238 061854Z

VISIT AND TRAVEL EXPENSES ----- 765,300

C. PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT ----- 112,000

D. ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES ----- 49,200

E. RELIEF EXPENDITURE (OF WHICH 629,000 IS
DESIGNATED FOR AID TO DETAINEES AND
FAMILIES) ----- 634,800

F. RESERVE FOR CONTINGENCIES AND WITHDRAWAL
(RENT, ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE DUE TO
INFLATION) ----- 82,700

TOTAL ----- 2,400,000 SWISS FRANCS

7. COMMENT: I SHOULD LIKE TO ASSOCIATE MYSELF FULLY WITH THE RECOMMENDATION MADE EARLIER IN GENEVA'S 9935, AND URGE THAT THE DEPARTMENT FIND THE MEANS TO RESPOND SOON AND POSITIVELY TO THIS APPEAL. HAVING TAKEN THE LEADING ROLE IN ADVANCING THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE, AND IN THE CONTEXT OF PRESENT CONDITIONS IN ARGENTINA, I FEEL WE WOULD BE SERIOUSLY REMISS IF WE FAILED TO SUPPORT IN A TANGIBLE AND GENEROUS MANNER THE HUMANITARIAN WORK BEING PERFORMED THERE UNIQUELY BY THE ICRC ON BEHALF OF THE PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT THE

DEPARTMENT ALSO VIEWS THE MATTER IN THIS LIGHT. END
COMMENT. VANDEN HEUVEL

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